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Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AID-05 EB-08 TRSE-00 OMB-01 XMB-02
CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00
NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11 /080 W
----------001730 022026Z /65
P R 021835Z MAY 78
FM AMEMBASSY BAMAKO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9348
INFO AMEMBASSY DAKAR
AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT

C O N F I D E N T I A L BAMAKO 2071

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: EAID, ML, SG, MR, US
SUBJ: PROPOSED VISIT OF OMVS CHIEFS OF STATE TO EUROPE
AND NORTH AMERICA

REF:(A) BAMAKO 1504, (B) STATE 089757, (C) STATE 096197

1. SUMMARY. I INFORMED THE MINISTER OF IMDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT MAY 2 THAT PRESIDENT CARTER WOULD NOT BE ABLE TO RECEIVE THE OMVS CHIEFS OF STATE AS PROPOSED IN EARLY JUNE. WHILE THAT WAS ACCEPTED, WITH DISAPPOINT-MENT, THE IDEA WAS NOT GIVEN UP FOR THE FUTURE. END SUMMARY.

2. BECAUSE OF VARIOUS EVENTS HERE AND SEVERAL ABSENCES OF LAMINE KEITA, THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT, IT WAS ONLY TODAY, MAY 2, THAT I WAS ABLE TO INFORM THE MINISTER THAT PRESIDENT CARTER'S CROWDED SCHEDULE WOULD NOT PERMIT HIM TO RECEIVE THE THREE OMVS CHIEFS OF STATE ON THEIR PROPOSED SWING TO EUROPE AND NORTH AMERICA IN MAY AND JUNE. I POINTED OUT THAT THE SITUATION WAS SO DIFFICULT THAT VISITS ALREADY ON THE PRESIDENT'S CALENDAR WERE HAVING TO BE POSTPONED.
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3. I ALSO SAID THAT THE PROPOSED TIMING WAS BAD FROM THE POINT OF VIEW OF OUR PARTICIPATION IN INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS. AS THE MINISTER KNEW, CURRENT

LEGISLATIVE CONSTRAINTS WERE GENERALLY AGAINST US ON INFRASTRUCTURE, BUT THE CONGRESS HAD NOW INDICATED

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A WILLINGNESS TO LISTEN TO THE ARGUMENTS FOR RIVER
BASIN DEVELOPMENT, REQUIRING MAJOR INVESTMENT IN INFRA-
STRUCTURE. WHILE NOTHING WAS CERTAIN, WE WERE HOPEFUL
THAT A CHANGE IN CONGRESSIONAL ATTITUDES MIGHT BE FORTH-
COMING IN THE FUTURE. GOW, HOWEVER, WAS TOO EARLY
FOR A VISIT ON THE SUBJECT.

4. I WENT ON TO SUGGEST THAT SENEGALESE PRESIDENT
LEOPOLD SENGHOR MIGHT WISH TO RAISE OMVS MATTERS WHEN
HE CALLED ON PRESIDENT CARTER DURING HIS PRIVATE VISIT
TO THE UNITED STATES IN JUNE.

5. THE MINISTER WAS DISAPPOINTED IN OUR RESPONSE AND
STRESSED THE IMPORTANCE THE THREE CHIEFS OF STATE ATTACHED
TO THEIR PRESENTING THE OMVS CASE TOGETHER. COULD NOT

A SIMPLE "WORKING" VISIT FOR THEM BE CONSIDERED? I
SAID WASHINGTON HAD ASSURED ME THAT A MEETING WITH
THE PRESIDENT WAS JUST NOT POSSIBLE. HE THEN ASKED WHETHER
WASHINGTON COULD NOT EVEN MENTION A LATER DATE AS AN
ALTERNATIVE. I SAID I UNDERSTOOD THAT UNFORTUNATELY
THE PRESIDENT'S CALENDAR WAS BOOKED THROUGH 1978.

6. LAMINE KEITA ACKNOWLEDGED THE PROBLEMS OF ARRANGING
THE SCHEDULES OF CHIEFS OF STATE. THERE HAD BEEN DIFFICULTY EVEN IN
PARIS, WHERE THE THREE PRESIDENTS
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WOULD ALREADY BE FOR THE FRANCO-AFRICAN SUMMIT, BUT
KUNOW A CALL ON PRESIDENT GISCARD HAD BEEN SET FOR MAY 20.

THE VISIT TO BONN WAS STILL BEING WORKED OUT. NO
RESPONSE HAD BEEN RECEIVED FROM OTTAWA, ALTHOUGH HE HOPED
TO LEARN SOMETHING FROM SENEGALESE MINISTER ADRIEN SENGHOR,
WHO HAD TRAVELED TO THESE CAPITALS AND WAS DUE IN BAMAKO
SHORTLY. "ANOTHER SOLUTION" WOULD HAVE TO BE FOUND.

7. THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT MADE A PLEA
THAT THE IDEA OF A THREE-PRESIDENTS VISIT NOT BE
ABANDONED OR FORGOTTEN. HE THOUGHT THAT, IN ADDITION
TO THE NEED OF OMVS FINANCING, IT WAS POLITICALLY
IMPORTANT THAT THEY BE RECEIVED IN WASHINGTON. IN THE
MEANTIME, COULD NOT THE CONCERNED MINISTERS OF THE
THREE COUNTRIES VISIT THE UNITED STATES AND TALK TO
APPROPRIATE OFFICIALS AND THE CONGRESS? HE URGED THAT THE
SUBJECT BE KEPT IN MIND.

8. I PROMISED THAT WE WOULD NOT FORGET THE MATTER.
I COMMENTED, HOWEVER, THAT EVEN A MINISTERIAL VISIT
WOULD BE PREMATURE UNTIL THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH HAD

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DEVELOPED ITS THINKING ON INFRASTRUCTURE FINANCING
AND HAD PREPARED A PLAN TO PRESENT FOR THE CONSIDERATION OF

THE CONGRESS.

9. COMMENT: I BELIEVE THE UNITED STATES SHOULD
PARTICIPATE IN THE FINANCING OF RIVER BASIN AND OTHER
NECESSARY INFRASTRUCTURE IN THE SAHEL AND CONSIDER
THAT A VISIT TO THE UNITED STATES BY MALIAN, MAURITANIAN,
AND SENEGALESE REPRESENTATIVES WOULD BE USEFUL FOR OUR
CASE AT AN APPROPRIATE TIME.
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